

**Minutes of the Meeting
June 18, 1998**

Projects Reviewed

Convened: 10:00am

Apprenticeship Training Center
Interpac Development
Bitter Lake & Lake Forest Park Reservoirs
Sand Point Village Street Use Permit
Green Streets (Commission discussion)
Nordstrom Office Building

Adjourned: 4:00pm

Commissioners Present

Barbara Swift, Chair
Moe Batra
Carolyn Darwish
Gail Dubrow
Bob Foley
Gerald Hansmire
Jon Layzer
Rick Sundberg

Staff Present

Michael Read
Peter Aylsworth
Rebecca Walls

061898.1 Project: **Apprenticeship Training Center**
 Phase: Schematic
 Presenters: Nettie Dokes, Seattle City Light
 Jeffrey Floor, Arai/Jackson Architects and Planners
 Neal Knapper, Seattle City Light
 Paul Marioni, artist
 Time: 1 hr. (0.3%)

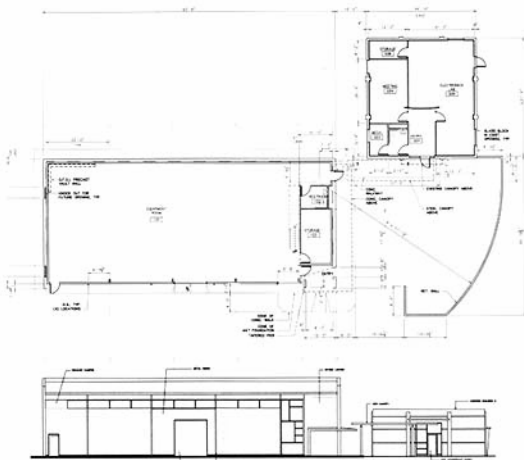
The City Light Apprenticeship Training program needs a building for hands-on training of apprentices. The program trains men and women as line workers, meter electricians, hydro-maintenance machinists, and station constructors. Each of these fields has a four and a half year apprenticeship program is divided into three phases with a total of eight training cycles, all of which are tested. The three phases include on-the-job work with journeymen, 144 hours of accredited academic training and education, and generation and distribution.

The program, currently scattered in separate facilities, will be consolidated in a new addition to the existing rectifier building on Spokane Street next to the railroad tracks. The rectifier is a concrete box, originally used to convert electrical power for the streetcar system. The surrounding area is highly industrial and noise plays a major role in the building design.

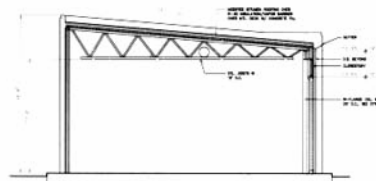
The proposed addition is a rectangular building with concrete walls on the north, west, and south sides. The east side of the building will be a steel frame with metal siding and a high glass clerestory. The concrete walls will have few openings to minimize train noise.

To the north of the new building, and east of the rectifier building will be a courtyard for the climbing tower. This area will also be used for other outdoor training activities such as lead wiping.

A concrete canopy will cover a wheelchair ramp along the north side of the building. A new metal canopy will also be added to the rectifier building over the existing entrance and the sidewalk to the new addition.



Plan and east elevation



Section and perspective of southwest facades



Existing Rectifier Bldg.



Existing site view north

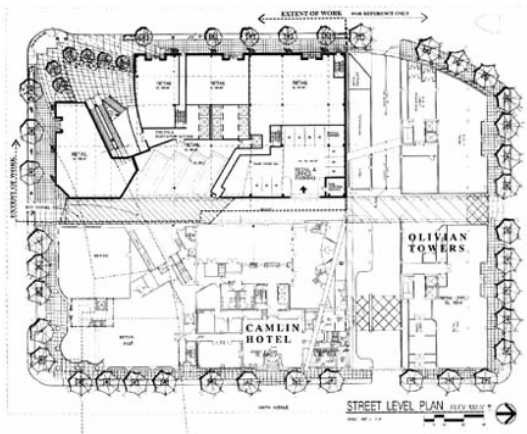
Discussion:

- Darwish:** Why don't the two entry canopies have matching materials and character? It seems like a way to tie the new and existing buildings together.
- Floor:** They are intentionally contrasted in material and character to distinguish between the old and new buildings. The concrete canopy needs more mass to achieve the necessary cantilever than the steel canopy. They could be more similar.
- Dokes:** We will be attaching things to the north concrete wall of the new building and working under the canopy, while the metal canopy only protects a circulation path. Activities under each canopy will be different.
- Dubrow:** What kind of activity will be going on under the concrete canopy?
- Dokes:** Primarily lead wiping which is similar to large-scale soldering. It is an older technique, but apprentices need to know how to deal with existing conditions in the field.
- Batra:** Why is there only one restroom in a facility for both men and women?
- Dokes:** A second restrooms would reduce the amount of usable work space. We are also trying to foster a sense of unity with gender division. In the field, men and women have to share restroom facilities.
- Floor:** There is another restroom in the existing rectifier building.
- Batra:** How are the acoustics in the rectifier building?
- Floor:** It has eight inch thick concrete walls and dampers that significantly reduce outside noise. We will be replacing the existing dampers with glass block.
- Dubrow:** I appreciate your efforts to foster a unified work force with shared restrooms. I also agree with Carolyn about connecting the two buildings. They seem to need more integration. There seem to be opportunities to celebrate dramatic activities making them publicly accessible through the building facade treatment. The new building also seems to need more integration between the metal facade and the concrete shell. Will there be any landscaping in the project?
- Floor:** We thought of the metal facade as the tender underbelly of the building that contrasts with the concrete shell. We haven't discussed landscaping, but most of the outdoor spaces require truck access. We initially wanted to have glazing in the east facade behind the pole top areas, but it wasn't feasible after the budget was reduce by one-third. We tried to emphasize the contrast between the two canopies, but will reconsider that approach.
- Sundberg:** I also agree with the previous comments regarding the canopies. They are a simple opportunity to link the two buildings together. I admire the directness of the project and the efforts to re-use the rectifier building. It would be interesting to see the climbing tower as part of the composition. I encourage showing these activities when possible. I also recommend a higher concrete curb below the metal siding. The metal siding close to the ground will get dented and beat up quickly and a more significant curb may be a way to weave the facade together with the concrete shell.

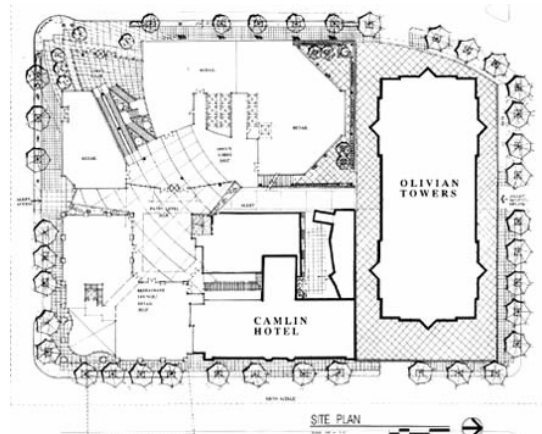
- Hansmire:** I also agree with the comments regarding the canopies. The outdoor yard is an important part of the facility design. The activities within it will change the character of the building. It may be a place to have the artists look at ways of integrating the hard industrial buildings with the softer human training activities.
- Swift:** I appreciate your use of the rectifier building. They are great objects around the city and it is nice to see the new building respond to it. The metal facade on the new building is neither contrasted enough with the concrete shell nor visually woven into the concrete shell. The next step would be to clearly define which approach you will take and develop it further. It still need another level of clarity.
- Foley:** I also like the response to the context and the rectifier building. There may be an opportunity to express the activities and function of the site in the climbing tower. Perhaps an artist could take a look at that opportunities.
- Dubrow:** There may also be an opportunity to pull back the concrete wall near the northeast entrance. This would expose more glazing and one of the pole tops to the outside as well as creating an opportunity to integrate the facade with the concrete shell. Is there a realistic opportunity for refinement within the budget constraints?
- Floor:** The more significant constraint is the schedule. City Light wants the building ready for training in 1999. There is not a lot of opportunity for redesign, but there is some for refinement. I like the idea of the glazed corner, but the acoustical engineer won't support it.
- Action:** **The Commission recommends approval of the project as presented in schematic design. The Commission appreciates the thorough presentation of a design that responds to the important needs of the facility and the opportunity to celebrate the City's role in apprenticeship training. The Commission makes the following comments and recommendations.**
- **further integrate the two new canopies as a way of weaving together the new and existing buildings;**
 - **further develop the metal facade with a higher concrete curb for increased durability and as a way of weaving together the metal facade and concrete shell;**
 - **develop the lighting design and the outdoor training area as an important part of celebrating the facility's activities.**

061898.2 Project: **Interpac Development**
 Phase: Skybridge
 Presenters: Janet Faulkner, Callison Architecture
 Courtney Kaylor, Phillips McCullough Wilson Hill & Fikso
 Jose Luis San Miguel, Callison Architecture
 Attendees: Gordon Clowers, Construction and Land Use
 Jack McCullough, Phillips McCullough Wilson Hill & Fikso
 Eric Wagner, Interpac Development Inc.
 Time: 1 hr. (hourly)

The Interpac Development is located on the block between Eighth and Ninth Avenues, Pine Street and Olive Way. The development consists of the Pin Center, at Eighth Avenue and Pine Street, the Olivian Towers along Olive Way, and a two-story retail addition to the Camlin Hotel.

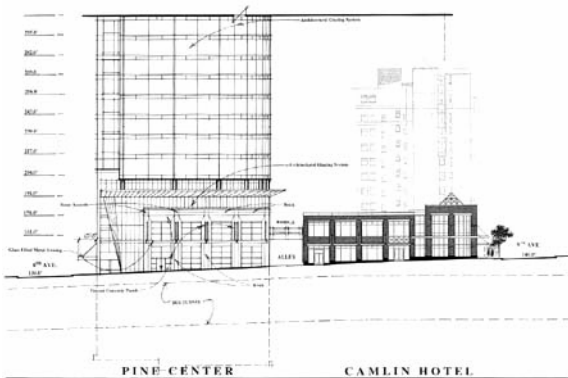


Street level plan

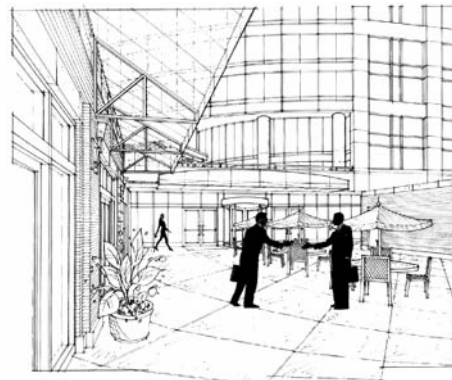


Plaza level plan

The alley will continue to function as a service corridor with access to parking under the Pine Center. The skybridge will give safe pedestrian access to the Camlin Hotel, retail, the Pine Center office building, and the Olivian Towers without impeding service access to the seven loading docks on the alley. The skybridge will also cover these loading docks from view while providing an open-air plaza for tenant and public use.



South elevation



View of Pine Center through plaza

The skybridge would be an extension of the Pine Center office lobby floor plate, crossing the alley, to the second floor patio level of the Camlin retail addition. The patio level could be accessed from the southwest through the glazed entry lobby to the Pine Center or from the southeast corner through the retail addition.

Discussion:

- Swift:** What phase of development is the project in?
- Faulkner:** The Pine Center is in the schematic design phase. The Camlin addition is in for building permit.
- Dubrow:** I can understand the private interests in more closely connecting the two developments across the alley, but don't understand the literal public benefit. It may be in the public's best interest to keep people on the sidewalk for added street vitality.
- Faulkner:** The Design Review Board was concerned that the plaza would become a dead retail space. We wanted to make it simple for people to get up to the plaza. It will primarily be used by residents of the apartment building and guests of the hotel and won't diminish activity along the sidewalk. The ground floor retail will help

support the Paramount Theater and add to the street vitality. As a destination, the plaza will probably increase activity along the sidewalk.

- Darwish:** What would the benefits be for people who are just passing through the site along the sidewalk or in the alley?
- Faulkner:** There will be bench seating on the sidewalk and an open air plaza space to linger in. There is a lot of development in the area and open space is becoming sparse.
- Swift:** The plaza will primarily serve the residents and guests of the development and shouldn't be described as a public benefit.
- Faulkner:** Improved pedestrian traffic flow is the main benefit.
- Dubrow:** It is in the City's best interest to encourage street vitality and to discourage secondary circulation routes within private developments. I encourage you to explore access to the plaza from the south side.
- Faulkner:** The retail spaces are accessible at street level.
- Dubrow:** Those street level retail spaces should be strengthened so that street vitality is maintained.
- Hansmire:** People walking on the sidewalk won't climb up to the second floor plaza, cross the alley, and then back down to the street on the other side. The plaza level is a destination spot, not a circulation pattern. The alley is also maintained as a service corridor. Therefore, the real public benefit mitigating the aerial vacation is the treatment of the sidewalk. It should be consistent with other City sidewalks and not related to the private development. I suggest looking at the Pine Street Improvement Plan.
- Faulkner:** We want to maintain a public feel to the streetscape.
- Hansmire:** I am comfortable with the plaza covering part of the alley. I am interested in how the sidewalk and landscaping are developed to tie into downtown as a public benefit. I would also like to see some kind of weather protection along the retail facades.
- Swift:** The Pine Street Task Force document would be a good tool for ideas and implementation.
- Foley:** Downtown blocks seem to be losing a sense of rhythm and scale as alleys are eliminated or covered. Is there an opportunity to pull the skybridge back away from the south facade, reinforcing the rhythm of Pine Street?
- Faulkner:** That is a good idea. We were discussing that option just yesterday and thought it would make sense.
- Hansmire:** Is the alley open to the sky in the center of the block?
- Faulkner:** Yes, you can see down into it on the north and south sides of the skybridge.
- Batra:** I can see some public benefits in the project, but want the plaza to be expressed as a public space from the street. Now it is hidden from view and looks more private than public.
- Faulkner:** Given the limited space and the potential number of residents and guests, the plaza is intended to service the portion of the public that uses the buildings.
- Batra:** pulling the balcony back from the south facade may reveal the plaza activities better.
- Swift:** The Downtown Land Use and Transportation Plan is a resource for evaluating skybridge permit requests.

Pedestrian grade separations, whether by skybridge, aerial tram or tunnel, may be allowed only when their development conforms with City code requirements and meets all the following criteria:

- A. Views along view corridors designated in Policy 17: Street Level Views will not be adversely affected.*
- B. Topographic and functional conditions require pedestrian circulation above or below the street or an unsafe or congested condition exists on the street.*
- C. Grade separation will not reduce or detract from a reasonable level of pedestrian activity on the street.*
- D. Direct physical and visual access to/from the facility will be provided to adjacent sidewalks, open spaces or public plazas.*

(excerpt from the Downtown Plan, page 15)

This project must meet all four criteria. Aspects of the project that could meet criteria C and D are questionable and need further development.

- Dubrow:** The entire complex of development seems to add to the street vitality, but the actual plaza and skybridge element does not.
- Swift:** Visibility of the plaza from the southeast corner does not appear possible.
- Read:** In reviewing the Pacific Place skybridge to Nordstrom, the Commission used these criteria and asked for additional quantitative information to convince them that it would not reduce sidewalk activity.
- Darwish:** I am concerned that the plaza will not be an obvious public space.
- Dubrow:** In terms of the criteria, I still think that B and C are not adequately met. The skybridge is not required for safety reasons because people should be crossing the alley at the sidewalk. It is still at a marginal level.
- Faulkner:** There are two portions of the public that would cross the alley. Camlin visitors would access parking from the alley and Olivian Tower users would cross the alley to get to the southeast and southwest corners of the block.
- Foley:** When I imagine the alternative of the plaza space being developed as a full architectural volume, I prefer the open space and plaza. I would only suggest that the southeast plaza access be more legible to the public.
- Faulkner:** The southeast corner is a two-story volume of glass that will be like a beacon at night. The stairs inside will be very visible. It is not as visible as the southwest corner, but we hope that curiosity will draw some people in.
- Dubrow:** It was a wonderful presentation with a lot of information to visualize the spaces proposed. In terms of the skybridge, I would rather not see it extended to the street, but pulled back and minimized.
- Clowers:** The Commission comments haven't addressed the southeast entrance. The Design Review Board liked the Pine Center atrium treatment and the connection to Pine Street. The connectivity of the buildings was also favored.
- Dubrow:** I am still concerned that criteria B and C have not been adequately met. I am not yet persuaded that the plaza will not detract from street activity.
- Sundberg:** The plaza is really an extension of the building floor plate rather than a bridge. I am not as concerned about the plaza covering the alley if it is held back from the south edge. The number one issue is activity on the sidewalk. I need convinced that street level vitality will not be reduced. I also recommend a strong wayfinding system so that people don't feel like they are trespassing when they go up to the plaza.
- Hansmire:** I want to be guaranteed that the sidewalk will be the City standard and will fit into the context of adjacent City ROW's. I am not convinced now. I don't think that the plaza will reduce pedestrian circulation and think that a strong streetscape environment would be fairly good mitigation for the skybridge.

Action on next page.

Action: The Commission recommends approval of the skybridge with the following conditions.

- pull back the skybridge from the south edge to reinforce alley opening;
- the sidewalk treatment must conform to the City standard, the Pine Street Advisory Task Force recommendations, and to any other neighborhood plan being developed;
- the plaza must be developed with improved visibility and wayfinding to ensure public use and accessibility;
- the Commission would like to see a later presentation of the project with these conditions met.

061898.3 Project: **Bitter Lake and Lake Forest Park Reservoir**
 Phase: Conceptual Briefing
 Presenters: Brent Middleswart, Seattle Public Utilities
 Bob Wallis, Dames & Moore
 Time: 1 hr. (0.3%)

The Bitter Lake Reservoir, capacity 21.5 million gallons, is located at Linden Avenue and Northeast 143rd Street. The Lake Forest Park Reservoir, capacity 60 million gallons, is located at 47th Avenue Northeast and Northeast 195th Street. Both the Bitter Lake Reservoir, constructed in 1958, and the Lake Forest Park Reservoir, constructed in 1962, will be covered by tensioned floating geomembrane cover systems, similar to a plastic swimming pool cover.

The scope of work also includes lining the reservoirs with a geomembrane material to eliminate leakage and converting the disinfection system from an outlet gas chlorination system to a recirculation and rechlorination system using sodium hypochlorite. The divider wall at the Lake Forest Park Reservoir will also be raised, effectively making two separate reservoirs. Corroded piping, valves, and meters will also be replaced at both reservoirs as necessary, along with repaving the perimeter access road to each. The Bitter Lake Reservoir project, costing approximately \$3.7 million, will be constructed in the Spring of 1999. The Lake Forest Park Reservoir, costing approximately \$7 million, will be constructed in the Spring of 2000.

Discussion:

Darwish: How do you plan to protect the new covers from vandalism and destruction?

Middleswart: Safety is a constant concern with existing open reservoirs as well as covered ones. A person could walk on the soft cover, but an attempt to cut it or damage it could result in falling in and drowning. We don't plan to relax security measures around the perimeter. Safety and security are the major deciding factors in perimeter fence locations.

Batra: What is the expected life span of the covers?

Wallace: Approximately 25 years.

Batra: In my experience, they tend to last about 15 years.

Middleswart: We are looking at the life spans in terms of replacement costs in 20 years.

Batra: Have you had problems with vandalism or penetration of other reservoir covers on the past?

Middleswart: Not that I know of. We have had some swimmers and golf balls in open reservoirs. Since the perimeter fencing was installed, those problems have been greatly reduced.

Batra: Will the chlorination system have a backup generator in case of power outages?

- Middleswart:** No, there is a residual of chlorination within the reservoir that is monitored. In the case of a power outage, if the chlorine level gets too low, we can add tablets manually. The water will always be treated.
- Dubrow:** What elements of decision making were left open to the community?
- Middleswart:** The public meetings were an attempt to get neighborhood comments. We are open to discussion about the cover color, relocating the fence, and landscaping, but the soft cover approach to the project is set. The cover will not dramatically change the aesthetics of the site. The public meetings are intended to inform the community of our plans, but we are open to their comments and concerns.
- Dubrow:** Have you discussed these projects with Neighborhood Planning groups?
- Middleswart:** We have had some informal discussions and earlier meetings. The Lake Forest group's only comment was in regards to the fence relocation at the north end. Bitter Lake groups had an interest in moving the fence and adding a sidewalk. These projects are not necessarily linked to the reservoir cover project and can be done independently.
- Foley:** In the past, lawns have been used to landscape surrounding areas based on a concern for debris in the reservoirs. Now that they will be covered, is there an opportunity to replace some of the lawn, which requires high maintenance, with native plants, that require no maintenance. The cost of mowing the lawn could then be spent on cleaning the cover, allowing for a more interesting landscape.
- Middleswart:** Excessive debris will still be a concern with the new covers. The scope of work at this point does not include any changes to the landscape.
- Sundberg:** The cover won't be attractive no matter what color it is. It seems that landscaping that requires less maintenance and less water could mitigate the color of the cover. The landscaping could even be a native evergreen type of plant that has limited debris. The reservoirs are strong water features within the communities. I suggest that a basic change in landscaping, that requires less maintenance, less water, and produces little debris, would constitute necessary mitigation for the color and the loss of a major water feature.
- Layzer:** I encourage you to consider landscaping mitigation now while the community concerns are few. Mitigation of future projects, that have more significant visual impacts to the community, will be easier if a process is set up now. It would be good experience for you to develop a mitigation plan with these projects that addresses major issues sure to be in future projects.
- Foley:** Even if there is no need for visual screening of the reservoirs, native plantings would be more environmentally efficient and healthy.
- Middleswart:** Those are good suggestions for SPU to consider. The current scope of work does not include either fence relocation or landscape changes, but we are not opposed to them being developed as separate projects. In the past other reservoirs have had shrubs and hedges that either died or got mowed down with the grass.
- Swift:** I also encourage the use of native plantings around the reservoirs. It will require an aggressive approach by SPU and an organizational change in the approach to site maintenance. Major changes in landscaping, with a clear direction to maintenance staff, will reduce the amount of required maintenance and money in the future.
- Hansmire:** These two reservoirs are atypical in that they are not readily visible from the surrounding community. The approach will have to change on future covers that are highly visible and mitigation will be necessary to offset their visual impact. It is worth considering mitigation as part of the budget and scope of work for these projects as a way of preparing for future projects.

Dubrow: SPU sees these covers as simple interventions with little impact on the community besides improved water quality and service. But they are fundamentally changing the nature of the public open space associated with the open reservoirs. The idea that these covers take something away from the community that should be mitigated needs to be established at a higher level within SPU. Mitigation could be as simple as moving a fence as the community requested, but it should be included in the budget and scope of work. I recommend that you reexamine the scope and budget beyond the engineering of the cover, to include ways of weaving the spaces back into the community.

Batra: Have economic analyses been done to compare the cost of soft covers versus hard covers?

Middleswart: Yes, they have. Hard covers have at least twice the 80 year cost that soft covers have. The decision to use a soft cover has been made and we are not here to debate the approach.

Batra: A hard cover would be a greater public benefit.

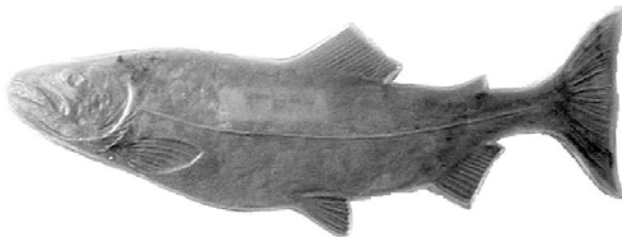
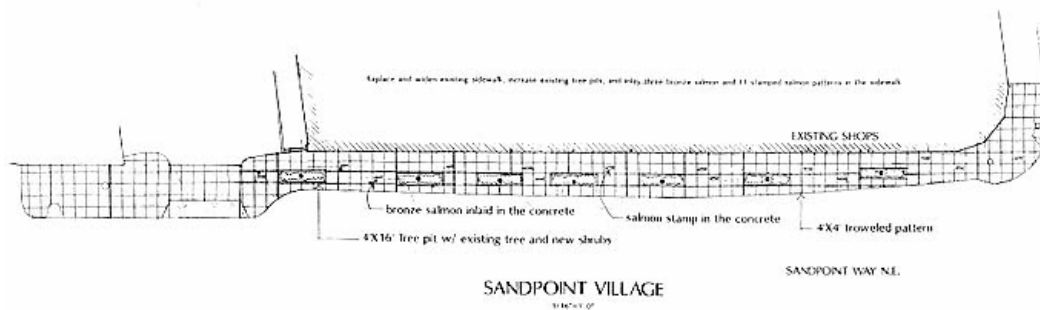
Middleswart: We would like to install hard covers, but it isn't financially feasible.

Action: **The Commission appreciates the complexity of the project and makes the following comments and recommendations.**

- **the Commission is concerned about the integration of reservoir covers into their surrounding neighborhoods;**
- **the Commission perceives the cover as taking away from the aesthetic quality of the reservoir and therefore encourages further study of the fence relocation, as requested by the community, without compromising security around the reservoir;**
- **the Commission recommends that Seattle Public Utilities develop a policy that addresses the larger community and urban design issues inherent in these types of projects, with the scopes of work and budgets defined accordingly;**
- **the Commission continues to recommend the involvement of an artist, landscape architect, or urban designer as part of the design team to develop neighborhood mitigation plans, to develop a palette of color options appropriate for all reservoir covers, and to ensure that these projects are well integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods.**

061898.4 Project: **Sand Point Village**
 Phase: Street Use Permit
 Presenters: John Jacobi, Windermere
 Richard Lawson, Lawson Architects
 Don Nelson, Seattle Transportation
 Time: .5 hr. (hourly)

In response to previous Commission concerns and comments, the diagonal grid scoring pattern has been changed to the standard four foot square scoring pattern, the lampposts were removed from the plan, the sidewalk will be the standard gray color, and the tree pits have remained the same size. The revised design has salmon stamped into random grids along the length of the sidewalk with three being bronze inlays at the east end.



Rubber salmon stamp for concrete.

Discussion:

- Dubrow:** Will the stamped salmon be bronze?
Jacobi: Most of the salmon will be stamped into the concrete, but three of them will be bronze inlays.
Layzer: What is the color of the concrete sidewalk?
Lawson: It is the City standard gray color.
Nelson: How deep will the salmon stamp be?
Lawson: Approximately an eighth of an inch. It will be within ADA safety standards.
Dubrow: Why is the sidewalk narrower at the west end?
Lawson: There is an existing tree there that the owner wants to preserve.
Darwish: What kind of lighting are you proposing?
Lawson: We will use the existing standard street lighting.
Jacobi: There are at least two street light poles that can be consolidated into one pole with two mast arms.
Swift: My only suggestion is to school the fish a little more.
Layzer: The Commission often reviews projects that seem to embellish the private property at the expense of the public ROW. This project seems to embellish the public realm.

Foley: I appreciate your use of the often disregarded Chum Salmon for the concrete stamps and bronze inlays.

Action: **The Commission recommends approval of the project as presented and appreciates the response to earlier comments and concerns. The Commission recommends clustering the salmon stamps and inlays closer together.**

061898.5 Project: **Commission Business**

Action Items:

- A. MINUTES OF JUNE 4TH MEETING: Approved as amended.

Discussion Items:

- B. TRANSITION: The Executive Director job description has been advertised in newspapers and on the internet via various web sites.
- C. WSCTC: Read reported
- D. MUNICIPAL CENTER UPDATE: Hansmire reported. City Council is discussing the sale of Key Tower.
- E. SOUND TRANSIT FIELD TRIP TO PORTLAND: Friedman update. Commissioners Batra and Layzer to attend the field trip on June 30th with City Councilmembers and Planning Commissioners.
- F. RESPONSE TO MAYOR SCHELL'S PROPOSAL: Swift reported on a meeting with Denna Cline, who wanted clarification on some points. A meeting to discuss the proposal with City staff, Boards and Commissions is scheduled for June 18, at 5:30 PM.
- G. USER GUIDELINES UPDATE: Staff reported on current stock of Posters and potential modifications. This could be a potential project for summer interns or work study students.
- H. SDC CHAIR: The Commission discussed the position of chair being vacated by Swift in the Fall. Sundberg is considering the position.
- I. SOUND TRANSIT TRI-COMMISSION REVIEW: The idea is still in conceptual phases. Murdock and Read reported on a draft proposal.
- J. SDC POWER POINT PRESENTATION TO CITY COUNCIL: SDC is scheduled for a full Council presentation on July 29th at lunch time.
- K. UW INTERNS: Read reported. SDC will be looking for one or two interns that have potential for extended internship periods throughout the school year.
- L. SUSTAINABLE BUILDING ROUND TABLE: Wed. June 24th at 12:30 to 1:30 in Council Chambers.
- M. DOWNTOWN RESOURCES CENTER: Read reported.

061898.6 Project: **Green Streets**
 Phase: Staff Briefing
 Presenters: Vanessa Murdock, Seattle Design Commission
 Rebecca Walls, Seattle Design Commission
 Time: .25 hr. (N/C)

The Commission discussed the Growing Vine Street project as a potential test case for the Strategic Resources Team currently being considered. It is also an opportunity for the City to show leadership in interdepartmental coordination, particularly in light of future Neighborhood Planning projects.

The Commission also discussed how the City's involvement in other Green Street projects could be improved through policy and procedural changes.

061898.7 Project: **Nordstrom Office Building**
 Phase: Alley Vacation
 Presenters: Tom Berger, The Berger Partnership
 Moira Gray, Seattle Transportation
 Tory Laughlin Taylor, Housing Resources Group
 Marilyn Senour, Seattle Transportation
 Scott Species, Denny Triangle/DUCPG
 Mike Whalen, AIA
 Time: 1 hr. (hourly)

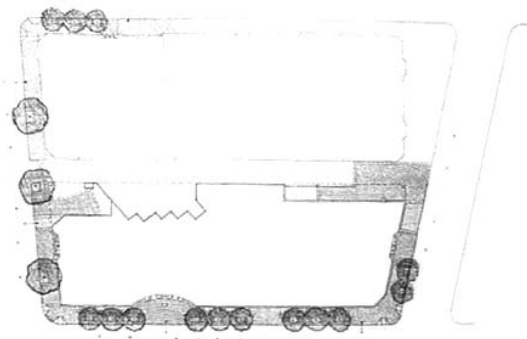
The project, located between Olive Way and Stewart Street and Seventh and Eighth Avenues, is currently in the schematic phase of development.

Since the last presentation to the Commission an agreement has been made between the Housing Resources Group, Clise Properties, and Nordstrom regarding the affordable housing component of the project. The number of affordable units has been increased from 39 to 65. Parking for the apartment building will be below grade with a secured, card key gate accessed from the alley.

Parking for the office tower and public parking will be below grade, not connected to the residential garage, and will be accessed from the alley near Olive Way.

The sidewalks will be a two-by-two foot grid pattern with 18 inch by 30 inch pre-cast pavers at building entries, at the ends of the alley, and at the parking egress on Stewart Avenue. The pavers will be a warmer gray color than the City standard.

There will be three clusters of three trees each along Seventh Avenue, two additional Gingko trees on Olive Way, and the three existing Liquid Amber trees along Stewart will remain.



Streetscape Improvement Plan

Discussion:

- Dubrow:** Is it possible to use a variance rather than a vacation to develop the project?
- Howard:** The alley vacation is the only way to combine the site for the needed FAR.
- Swift:** How have you responded our recommendation of supporting transit use?
- Whalen:** There are no bus stops currently on the site due to the one-way street configuration. We have included an overhead canopy for weather protection along .
- Layzer:** Will the building be conditioned in terms of trip reduction programs and transportation?
- Howard:** Yes. It is also going to be reviewed by a Design Review Board and may have additional conditions as a result.
- Layzer:** The affordable public housing seems like a major public benefit, but I am not sure whether or not it is adequate. I would like to know some dollar amounts as a basis for evaluating it.
- Darwish:** Are all the parking garages accessed from the alley?
- Whalen:** Yes, the parking entrances are all on the alley at the request of DCLU to reduce the number of curb cuts. The alley traffic has been exhaustively explored by our traffic consultant.
- Dubrow:** I appreciate your attention to our past comments. It is a shame that the City doesn't have a mechanism that can increase FAR and transfer development rights while maintaining ownership of the ROW. I wonder if there is a design solution for combined parking garages that makes the housing section an end destination accessed through the shared entrance. It could still have a card key gate and security.
- Taylor:** I am not sure that a single parking entry will be the best solution for both pedestrians and vehicles.
- Dubrow:** The objective of consolidating entries is to minimize resources spent on wayfinding. This would allow funds to be used to develop a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- Whalen:** We looked at parking below the alley connecting to the two levels of residential parking. However, utilities in the alley prevented connecting to the first level of residential parking.
- Foley:** I like the separate parking.
- Layzer:** There will be a lot of vehicular movement and I would rather see it in the alley than off the street. I think you have done a good job keeping the entries away from the sidewalk.
- Batra:** I like the separate parking garages. I also like the increase in affordable housing. The difference between the required 39 units for the FAR and the proposed 65 units seems like a significant public benefit.
- Darwish:** What will be the range of rents for the housing?
- Taylor:** Half of the units will be below 50 percent of median income and half of the units will be below 60 percent of median income. That currently equates to a range of \$400 to \$600 for studio and one bedroom units.
- Layzer:** What is the value that the housing derives from the development?
- Taylor:** The greatest value is having a site or location to build. We often have potential projects with willing developers, but can't find a site in the downtown area.
- Layzer:** What is the estimated value derived by the developer compared to the public benefit through the affordable housing?
- Taylor:** There are many aspects to the financing of this project. There is a direct sum of \$1.25 million through the housing bonus program. There are also tax credits and

bonds as well as the difference between the site's actual value and what we have to pay for it.

Layzer: What is the allowable square footage versus the actual square footage based on the vacation?

Whalen: Within the DOC-2 zone we have a maximum FAR of ten and a minimum of four. Above the FAR of four are three tiers of bonuses.

Layzer: The \$1.25 million gets you a two FAR bonus.

Whalen: The total 528,000 square feet of office space would be in two separate buildings without the alley vacation. The only increase in square footage gained from the vacation is 18,000 square feet, 1,800 square feet of actual alley space multiplied by an FAR of 10.

Layzer: The opportunity to do one building, housing the tenant more effectively, increases the value of the vacation beyond just the square footage.

Whalen: Consolidating the office space is a commercial benefit, but the affordable housing is a public benefit.

Swift: Are there streetscape amenities that apply to the bonuses?

Whalen: Yes.

Berger: After the development rights are transferred and the bonuses and tax credits are complete, is there a way to give the ROW back to the City?

Barnett: There is a mechanism for receiving gifts, but it raises the core issue of why it was vacated in the first place. The housing is a bonus provision and is not seen as a public benefit under terms of the street vacation policies. One public component can't be used to meet all public benefit requirements.

Layzer: Will the two buildings be connected?

Whalen: No.

Layzer: The benefit to the office development is about 72,000 square feet. At approximately \$200 per foot, the benefit is around \$15 million. So the commercial benefit is in the multi-million dollar range.

Whalen: There are also significant construction and development costs, so that it is not a net gain of millions.

Taylor: Housing components of similar projects usually occur off-site. There is a significant public benefit in just having a downtown site to build on.

Dubrow: Is there a level of public benefits in the project that can be associated with the alley vacation rather than the bonuses?

Sundberg: From an urban design standpoint, having two separate buildings rather than one connected is a public benefit.

Species: Is there a commitment to keeping the housing affordable?

Taylor: Yes. Most of the bonds have a 20 year minimum stipulation and some have 30 to 40 year minimums for maintaining the affordable housing.

Layzer: The approach to the streetscape appears to be more of an embellishment to the building than to the public realm.

Swift: I am also concerned about the streetscape. I would rather see an approach that encourages lingering along the sidewalk. I am also concerned about the egress onto Stewart Avenue which appears to be a widening of the alley opening. I would rather see the parking garage exit into the alley or have the exit onto Stewart moved away from the alley.

Whalen: Two conditions dictated where the egress was located. The curb cut on Stewart Avenue is required to have ten foot sight triangles on each side. Our traffic consultant was also concerned about having the egress too close to the intersection.

- Swift:** Can the parking exit into the alley?
- Whalen:** No, extensive traffic studies concluded that it is not possible.
- Swift:** I don't feel that the public is getting benefits equal to the bonuses.
- Taylor:** From our point of view, having a site to build on is a huge benefit.
- Sundberg:** I think that the housing is a reasonable public benefit.
- Whalen:** We are proposing more housing units than what we are bonusing from. The original 39 units constituted the bonuses, but the increase to 65 units is not part of a bonus package and is a clear public benefit of 26 units.
- Batra:** I think that the additional housing is a real public benefit. Other public benefits could consist of streetscape improvements, furniture, wayfinding, shelter.
- Dubrow:** The downtown housing is a public benefit, but the alley vacation is a greater benefit to the commercial functions. The streetscape design could be more of an amenity to the public. A strong streetscape environment is a necessary public benefit to offset the value of the alley vacation.
- Layzer:** I don't want to undervalue the importance of affordable housing in the downtown core, but I don't feel that the effort made to provide streetscape enhancements meets my expectations. Improvements could also extend beyond the site boundaries.
- Whalen:** The public is not losing the use of the alley.
- Swift:** That is true, but the ownership is changing.
- Sundberg:** We should be specific about the kinds of streetscape improvements we are looking for. I am not interested in fancy paving and patterns and street trees are required by code. Other amenities could be furniture, enhanced transit shelters on adjacent sites, pedestrian scale lighting, public art, drinking fountains. I recommend using the Pike Street Improvement Project or the Pine Street Advisory Task Force document as resources.
- Species:** You could ask the Neighborhood Council what kind of improvements they would like.
- Foley:** I think that it is important to compare the value of the Transferred Development Rights to the reduction in cost to the housing group for use of the site. I don't think the Commission can evaluate this but the City must understand it.
- Layzer:** From an urban design perspective, the separate buildings is preferable although it undermines the intent of granting alley vacations.
- Action:** **The Commission supports the separation of the two buildings from an urban design perspective although it is counter to the intent of an alley vacation. The Commission realizes that the increase in housing units from 39 to 65 is a clear public benefit not tied to the FAR bonuses and makes the following recommendations.**
- **pursue further development of public benefits beyond those tied to FAR bonuses;**
 - **develop the streetscape environment with attention to public amenities such as seating, transit shelters, drinking fountains, donations to the public arts fund, and others that may be identified in Neighborhood Planning efforts.**